



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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## **Gov. Gregoire proclaims Aug. 7-13 Washington Farmers Market Week** ***Washington's 160 farmers markets benefit farmers, consumers, tourists***

**OLYMPIA** – The popularity of farmers markets continues to multiply across the state. Shoppers are visiting Washington's 160 farmers markets not only to enjoy fresh, locally grown produce, meats, cheeses and specialty food products, but also to experience new products and increase access to nutritious, healthy foods for their families.

To recognize their growing importance to consumers, farmers and the economy, Gov. Chris Gregoire, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and the Washington State Farmers Market Association (WSFMA) are celebrating [Farmers Market Week](#) in Washington Aug. 7-13.

"Farmers markets support local farms and small businesses, promote healthy eating and bring communities together," Gregoire said. "Farmers markets positively impact and shape the social and economic fabric of Washington's communities, large and small."

Statewide, farmers markets belonging to the WSFMA reported nearly \$39 million in sales in 2010, up from \$32 million reported in 2009. Dozens of other farmers markets also facilitate substantial sales, with dollars going directly to Washington family farmers and the local community.

"Farmers selling at the markets have become the face of agriculture in our state," said Dan Newhouse, WSDA director. "These markets are real community builders whether they operate daily at Seattle's Pike Place Market or once a week in a small town. They generate sales for growers, a great social atmosphere and showcase Washington's freshest local produce."

In September, beer and wine sampling will be allowed at 10 farmers markets that obtain an endorsement from the Washington State Liquor Control Board. A list of the participating markets is available on the [WSLCB website](#).

"Farmers markets are located in 36 counties in the Evergreen State which furthers our vision to have strong farmers markets within reach of every farmer and state resident," said Karen Kinney, interim executive director of the WSFMA.

It's also becoming easier to make convenient purchases at markets without bringing a lot of cash. More than 65 markets in the state feature wireless point-of-sale terminals capable of processing SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits through an electronic benefits transfer system.

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“Accepting SNAP/EBT cards, credit and debit cards are significant steps to meet shopper needs,” Kinney said. “The technology increases the ability for all residents to buy healthy, fresh foods. Our markets are reporting an increase in the number of shoppers, translating into increased sales for our vendors.”

Several markets are planning special tours in August in recognition of Farmers Market Week. For a directory of farmers market locations and operating hours, visit the [WSFMA website](http://www.wsfma.org) at [www.wafarmersmarkets.com](http://www.wafarmersmarkets.com)

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Click for a copy of Governor Chris Gregoire’s proclamation for Washington State Farmers Market Week at <http://agr.wa.gov/News/2011/FarmersMarketWeekProclamation2011.pdf>

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